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Information has been received of the death of M. Daussy, Member of the Bureau des Longitudes at Paris, and an Associate of the Society.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Astronomical Observations made at the Sydney Observatory in the year 1859. By W. Scott, M.A., Astronomer for New South Wales. Sydney, 1860. 8vo. pp. i. to xxiv. and 1 to 112.

In the *Monthly Notices*, vol. xix. p. 293, are printed some extracts from the first Annual Report to the Observatory Board, 22d Dec. 1858, giving an account of the establishment and the position of the Observatory. The Transit Circle arrived from England about the end of December 1858; but the regular observations were not commenced until June 1859.

It appears by the observations published in the *Monthly Notices*, vol. xx. p. 77, that the latitude and longitude of the Observatory were provisionally found to be Lat. $33^\circ 51' 41''\cdot 1$ S.; Long. $10^h 4^m 59^s\cdot 86$ W. The corrected values, as given by the Observations of Zenith Distances of *Nautical Almanac* Stars and the Observations of Moon-culminating Stars during the year 1859, are found to be Lat. $33^\circ 51' 40''\cdot 8$ N.; Long. $10^h 4^m 59^s\cdot 96$ W.

The greater part of the volume is occupied with Transit and Zenith-distance Observations of Stars; and from these are deduced the mean right ascensions and north polar distances for 1st January, 1859. It is from the internal evidence afforded by these that an estimate can be formed of the amount of reliance to be placed on the results which may hereafter proceed from the Observatory.

The causes of error are in a great measure of a temporary nature; such, for instance, as the changes in the piers of the instrument, owing to the contraction of the sandstone; but the results indicate also a permanent instrumental error, such as an irregularity in the form of the pivots. The errors of observation are not greater than those which occur in observatories of a high class, as those at Oxford and Cambridge, and are such as to disappear to a great extent when the mean of four or five observations is taken; but the instrumental errors are such that, although the circle may be regarded for some purposes as a useful instrument, yet it cannot be classed among instruments of the highest order, nor can its results compare in accuracy with those obtained at the Royal Observatory at the Cape of

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Good Hope. It was therefore desirable to avoid as much as possible observing the same stars as had recently been, or would soon be observed, at the Cape of Good Hope. But, in the absence of information from thence, it was decided to observe, in addition to *Nautical Almanac* stars, only those stars of the 6th and 7th magnitudes which are given in the British Association Catalogue or in Lacaille's New Catalogue; and up to the end of 1859 the observations were limited to a space of 10° on each side of the zenith. But the equatoreal telescope, which has been ordered of Messrs. Merz and Son (7 inches French in aperture and 9 feet 8 inches focal length), and is in course of construction, when it arrives, may perhaps give a totally different direction to the efforts of the Observatory.

Taschenbuch für Mathematik, Physik, Geodäsie, und Astronomie. Von Dr. Rudolf Wolf, dritte umgearbeitete und erweiterte mit 22 Tabellen und 5 Figurentafeln ausgestattete Auflage, 12mo. Bern, 1860, pp. 1–269.

This little volume appears to be a most convenient handbook, comprising the utmost possible information for its bulk on the subjects to which it relates, and the author's name is a guarantee for the character of the work.

Memoria sobre el Eclipso de Sol de 18 *de Julio de* 1860. Por D. Francisco de Paula Marquez, Capitan de Navio de la Armada, y Director del Observatorio de Marina de S. Fernando. Publicada de Orden Superior. 8vo. Madrid, 1861.

The work contains an account of the Observations of the Eclipse, made at Oropesa, on the east coast of Spain, near the central line, by the Spanish Naval Commission under the command of D. F. Marquez, in company with the Portuguese Commission from Coimbra. It contains also an elaborate "Optical" theory of the Corona, Red Prominences, and other phenomena of the Eclipse, considered as arising from the diffraction and reflexion in our atmosphere of the light refracted at the border of the Moon's disk, and from the motion of the Moon.

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